

A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D ON

Tuesday, Novemb. 7. 1710.

BEING THE

Day of Thanksgiving

Appointed by

Her M A J E S T Y

F O R

The S U C C E S S E S of the last Campaign
in *Flanders and Spain.*

By T H O M A S B R A D B U R Y. *K*

Ecclef. I. 9. The thing that has been, is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the Sun.

L O N D O N,

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ISAIAH XXIV. 16.

*From the uttermost Parts of the Earth
have we heard Songs, even Glory to
the Righteous : But I said, My
Leanness, my Leanness, Wo unto
me ! the treacherous Dealers have
dealt treacherously, yea the treache-
rous Dealers have dealt very treache-
rously.*

TIS all one to the solemn Occa-
sion upon which I have call'd your
Thoughts to these words, whe-
ther you consider them as a Pro-
phesy of what was to happen afterwards, or
a History of what really came to pass in the
days when they were writ. Tho they may be
understood of the Salvation that wou'd find
its way to the *Gentiles, the uttermost Parts of
the Earth*, and the sad Calamity that *Israel*
must be left under, when God had *concluded* Rom. xi.
them all in Unbelief; yet they were true e- 32.
nough in the Prophet's own time. He liv'd
in *Hezekiah's* Reign, when the King of *Assyria*
had made one Invasion upon them, and was
threatning them with another; several good
Designs were blasted, when they had almost
A 2 got

Chap. got their Perfection: *The Children were come*
 xxxvii. 3. *to the Birth, and there was not Strength to bring*
forth. They had great Discoveries of a Mes-
siah, who was to raise up the Tabernacle of
David ; but a Flood of Impiety and Violence
gave them the Prospect of a Desolation before
those times of refreshing shou'd come. Their
publick Mercies were interlin'd with Danger,
which oblig'd them to worship with a Com-
 Psal. ii. 11. *position of Praise and Sorrow, to serve the*
Lord with Fear, and rejoice with Trembling. In
the day of Prosperity their Duty was to re-
 Eccl. vii. *joice, in the day of Adversity they were call'd*
 14. *to consider ; and now God had set the one over*
against the other.

The ill Face of their Concerns in one place shou'd not make them forget what God had done for them in another; and the Success they had abroad was to be admir'd with a serious dread of what they were suffering at home. Our Prophet takes his part in both these Reflections:

I. He owns the publick Mercy they had receiv'd, tho it was afar off; *From the uttermost Parts of the Earth have we heard Songs : Or, that which was the happy occasion of them, even Glory to the Righteous.*

II. He calls in the Joy that was running so freely upon one Act of Providence, to the different Views they were led to by another: *I said, my Leanness, my Leanness, Wo unto me ! the treacherous Dealers have dealt treacherously, yea the treacherous*

treacherous Dealers have dealt very treacherously.

That I may comprehend my whole Design from these words within one Sermon, I can do little more than take them afunder, giving you both the Sense and the Improvement of them as we go along.

I. In his Account of those publick Mercies that Providence had given them, you may observe three things :

The Place where they happen'd, *the uttermost Parts of the Earth.*

The Work they inclin'd the People to, which is here exprest by the *Songs* that were heard.

And the Nature of the Blessing it self; the Happiness it either consisted of, or was tending to, *Glory to the Righteous.*

(1.) The Mercy that our Prophet takes notice of, was something that happen'd at a great distance from the Place where he liv'd, so that his Family and Country were not immediate Gainers by it; it was *from the uttermost Parts of the Earth* that they heard these *Songs*, and yet they fall into the Consort, from the Sympathy there is among all good People, who *will rejoice with those that do rejoice.* From such a Temper, on this occasion, we may

Observe, That every religious Person is so unconfin'd in his Thoughts and Wishes, that he can be glad in a Mercy that falls to the share of others. The Reasons of this ingenuous diffusive Concern are plain.

1st. 'Tis from that common Interest that unites all Believers. They are represented as the

- the *Body of Christ, and Members one of another*; to tell us, that besides the humble relation they bear to him, there is a mutual *Tenderness* that circulates among themselves; *Whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it; or one Member be honour'd, all the Members rejoice with it.* The Apostle cou'd be glad at the Prosperity of the *Corinthian Church*, tho a very different way of living fell to his
- 1 Cor. xii. 26. *Lot: Ye are full, ye are rich, ye have reign'd as Kings without us; and I wou'd to God that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. We are Fools for Christ's sake, ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, ye are strong; ye are honourable, we are despis'd.*

- Thus it ought to be in the Reverse of this Case: When we are *deliver'd from the Hand of those that hate us, and can serve God without Fear*, we shou'd remember them that are in Bonds, as being bound with them; and those that suffer *Adversity*, as being our selves also in the Body: not out of the reach of those Evils, which are actually their Lot, and may soon be ours.
- Heb. xiii. 3. *This is bearing one another's Burdens, and fulfilling the Law of Christ.* Tho Gratitude shou'd put us in mind of the happy distinctions God has made between us and others, yet Compassion has a noble way of forgetting all that, and placing our own Souls into their Case. Thus it was with the *Jews* in their Revolution:
- Gal. vi. 3. *When God turn'd again their Captivity, filling their Mouth with Laughter, and their Tongue with Singing, they cou'd not forget those they had left behind, but beg it as a new Mercy; Lord, turn again our Captivity as Streams in the South; that they who yet sow in Tears may reap in Joy; and every one who now goes forth weeping, bearing*
- Pf. cxxvi. 1, 2.

bearing his precious Seed, may come again rejoicing, bringing his Sheaves with him.

And the same Spirit of universal Concern should guide us when the Scales are turn'd. Tho we may be on the suffering side, it's a Mercy that God deals in softer Methods with any of our Brethren. The poor Christians in Judea, who liv'd on the Contribution of other Churches, they *abounded in many Thanksgivings to God*; 'twas with no Envy that they consider'd other People in better Circumstances, but rather by the Experiment of this Ministration, they glorified God for their professed Subjection to the Gospel of Christ. Religion sanctifies and improves such a Temper, it helps us to take a part in the good of others. People thus enclin'd are prepar'd to be call'd in by those Words, *Rejoice with Jerusalem*, Isa. lxvi. *and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for Joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.* *David* begs to have his Mercies in a publick way; *O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen; that I may rejoice in the Gladness of thy Nation, that I may glory with thine Inheritance.* 'Twas this that fetch'd out so many good Wishes from the People, as they went into the House of God; *Peace be within thy Walls, and Prosperity within thy Palaces: For my Brethren and Companions sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee.* And it's promis'd as the greatest Encouragement to the Man who fears the Lord, *God shall bless him out of Sion, and he shall see the good of Jerusalem all the days of his Life.*

2. The Honour of God and our Dear Redeemer is advanc'd by this means; so that, tho we should seem to be more out of the way of

2 Cor. ix.
12, 13.

re- 10.

Psal. cvi.

4, 5.

Psal.

cxxii. 7, 8.

Psal.

cxxviii. 5.

of His Care, yet we must *blefs him that comes in the Name of the Lord*, and sing to the *Providence, Peace in Heaven, and Glory in the highest*. If He does but *increase*, and a way is open'd for the enlarging of His Kingdom; tho we are in a *decreasing State*, therein we do rejoice, yea and will rejoice. 'Twas a sad Consideration to the Apostles, that their own Countrymen, the *Jews*, had so many Marks upon 'em of a People cast off by God; but under this melancholy View, they had the Satisfaction to see, that tho the Gospel remov'd its place, it did not lose its Virtue. Thus, tho *Israel* was not gather'd, a Redeemer would be glorious, by forming an Interest among the *Gentiles*: And so it ought to be with every Christian; tho he cannot think of losing what God has given him without a dread (*for wo unto us when his Soul departs from us*) yet his good Wishes follow the *Lamb whithersoever he goes*. He rejoices at the Success of Religion, and the Establishment of Liberty in those places where he is never like to come: He loves to hear of *Songs, and Glory to the righteous*, tho it be from the uttermost parts of the Earth.

3. 'Tis an Argument upon which Faith can plead, and wait for a return of Mercy to our selves. The God who had given this Prophet *Songs* from abroad, was able to cure the *Leanness* he complain'd of at home. 'Tis a Sign that *His Arm is not shorten'd*; nor has He totally abandon'd his People, but *Judgment will return unto Righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it*. These are plain Demonstrations, that the Case is not desperate, upon which we may thank God, and take
 Courage;

Joh.iii.30

Rev. xiv.
4.

Isa. lix. 1.

Psal. xciv.
15.

Acts
xxviii. 15.

Courage; such a Turn as this puts a new Credit upon the Promises, when we begun to think they were growing out of date: And thus, *to the upright there arises Light in the midst of Darknes.* We may hope, tho we 4. have been *answer'd by terrible things in Righteousness*, yet He is still *the God of our Salvation*; Psal. lxxv. when we hear that *He is the Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth*, 'tis an Argument that He will not be unmindful of us when *they who dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid of His Tokens.*

With these Expectations we may look upon the late Victories in *Spain and Flanders*, as an Evidence that God yet *goes forth with our Armies*, and will be to the residue of his People *as in the former Years.* 'Tis good pleading on such an Instance, *Wilt thou not revive us again, that Thy People may rejoice in Thee?* And we Psal. lxxxv. 6. may humbly conclude, that *surely His Salvation is near unto them that fear Him, that Glory may dwell in Our Land.* Ver. 9.

(2.) Another Thing observable in this Mercy, is the Duty that it led the People to, and that was *Songs.* *We have heard these; i. e.* We have heard the Joy that it put them into: They are glad at the breaking of *a Yoke which they could not bear.* Or, we have heard the Things, and improv'd 'em into Songs at home; for when God's Works praise Him, *His Saints should bless Him.* Psal. cxlv. This signifies two Things, 10. which the News of every publick Mercy ought to produce in us.

1. A Pleasure in our selves. *Be glad for ever,* says God, *in what I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a Rejoycing, and her People a Joy.* When the Lord turn'd again our Captivity,

we were like them that dream'd ; the Thing stole in upon the Senses, before it could make its way to Reason : 'Twas equally hard to deny it, and believe it ; the former would be acting against Fact, and the latter against Hopes. On such occasions our Gladness should have the Controul of every other Passion. The Jews, when they went out of Captivity, met with a great many Difficulties, and they wept when they heard the Law : But Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites that taught 'em, said
 Neh. viii. *to 'em, This Day is holy unto the Lord your God,*
 9, 10, 11. *mourn not nor weep ; but go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send Portions to them for whom nothing is prepar'd : For this Day is holy unto the Lord ; neither be ye sorry, for the Joy of the Lord is your Strength. And indeed, our Zeal for God's Glory and the Concerns of Religion, deserves to bear down any present Affliction. When they sat by the Rivers of Babylon, tho there was no singing the Lord's*
 Psal. cxxxvii 4 *Song in a strange Land, yet they could not forget Jerusalem, or cease to prefer it above their chiefest Joy.*

2. A Gratitude to the God who has given us this great Mercy. We are to turn it into
 Isa. xxx. 25. *Devotion : Ye shall have a Song as in the Night, when a holy Solemnity is kept, and Gladness of Heart, as when one goes with a Pipe, to come into the Mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Israel. This is what He expects from us as a return to any Kindness. When Hezekiah recover'd from his Sickness, he went into the*
 Isa. xxxviii. 20. *Temple with this Resolution, The Lord was ready to save me, and therefore we will sing my Songs to the stringed Instruments all the days of our Lives. And the bestowing of a Favour is call'd*

call'd putting a new Song into our Mouths, even Praise to the Lord; which is an Argument that we should receive it under such an Influence. This lets us see what Course our Pleasure in a Mercy should be directed to: It ought to go off in a Veneration for Him whose Work it is. Besides the Serenity that it spreads over our own Minds, we should offer the Sacrifice of Praise, even the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks unto His Name. Psal. xl. 3. Heb. xiii. 15.

(3.) We need not wonder that the Mercy is express'd in Songs, when we read what it consists of, even *Glory to the Righteous*; either,

1. To a Righteous God, or the *Messiah*, who is so often call'd the Holy One: He is to have the Glory of every Providence; the Song is devoted to Him. Or,

2. To a righteous Cause; which Freedom of Worship according to the Scriptures, and quiet Enjoyment of Civil Properties, always was, and always will be. This will have a Glory put upon it, by those Displays that God gives of himself in favour of his own People. Or,

3. To righteous Men. They will have a share in the Glory, which an envious World would not allow 'em; but it shall rise from the Success and Blessing that God has follow'd 'em with. All these Interpretations may be comprehended in the Sense of the Words, which you may take in this.

Observ. The Publick Mercies we receive at the Hands of God, are for His own and His Peoples Glory; to advance His Name in the World, and preserve a Seed to serve Him, who will be accounted to the Lord for a Generation. Psal. xxii. 30.

Luke i.
74, 75. 'Tis to make Religion more triumphant in the Hearts and Lives of Men; that *being deliver'd from the fear of our Enemies, we may serve Him in Righteousness and Holiness all our days.* And if that is the Design of such a Providence, then,

1. It ought to be improv'd to these noble
Rom. xiii. Ends: not to *make provision for the Flesh, and fulfil the Lusts thereof*; but rather to take heart in the practical part of Christianity: To abound in Faith and Holiness, learning to be more cool towards a World, where every thing's uncertain, and uniting our main Regard to an Interest in Heaven. From such a Dispensation we shou'd get a Spirit above the Fear of Men: For, after God has over-rul'd the Fury of the Oppressor, it's our Glory not to be afraid of a Man that shall die, and the Son of Man that shall be made as Grass, and forget the Lord our Maker.

Isa. li, 12,
13.

2. We may use it as an Earnest of those good things that God has told us of in his Word: For if the Glory of the Righteous is promoted by every Conquest of the Enemy, what a happy State will that be, when they are all taken away who rejoice in their Pride, and are haughty because of his holy Mountain? When the Remnant of Israel shall not do Iniquity, nor speak Lyes, neither shall a deceitful Tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed, and lie down, and none shall make 'em afraid? This is a Glory that shall be reveal'd in us: And, tho' things continuing as they were from the beginning, or rather growing worse, may lead us into the Question, *Where is now the Promise of his Coming?* yet, the time to favour Sion, yea the set time will come. And the Mi-
series

Zeph. iii.
11, 12.

Rom. viii.
18.

2 Pet. iii.
4.

series that fall upon God's People, are no contradiction to their Hope : for there's nothing gives a greater Dawn to that Mercy, than when they are *taking pleasure in the Stones, and* Pf. cxxii. 14.
favouring the Dust thereof.

Follow every Victory, then, with Prayer and Faith : Do nothing upon these occasions unworthy of the *Glory* you bear at present, or that you expect hereafter. Remember that all these Confusions and dashing of one Monarch against another, are to promote the Interest of Religion, that *the Kingdom may be* Psa. xxii. 28, 31.
the Lord's, and He the Governour over the Nations ; and that some may arise, and declare to a People yet unborn, that he has done this.

Thus, you see with what Temper of Mind the good Prophet in our Text regarded the *Songs* that he heard from the uttermost parts of the Earth. He took a share in 'em, as they imported *Glory to the Righteous*. The whole Argument may be easily brought over into our own Case. God has lately renew'd our hopes of seeing the Enemy distress'd in *Flanders*, and driven out of *Spain* : And in this, his Providence seem'd to remove the only Impediment to a General Peace. The Article that came most into debate, appear'd in a fair way of being answer'd, when the *French* were preparing to receive the *Man*, whom they would not agree to recall. Obliging him to quit that Kingdom, which they objected against, was a Work put into other hands, and the difficulty almost over. And if we could hear what is *sung* in those uttermost Parts, it would be to the *Glory* of that *Learned Hero*, who has bin mighty both in Deed and Word ; and having so nobly defended a Revolution

lution in *Britain*, has had the Success to begin one in *Spain*. A Person equally happy at his Pen and Sword, to convince *Gainfayers*, and put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men. May Liberty always prosper in those good hands, when he either pleads it as an Argument, or pursues it as a Cause! But,

II. The Prophet had something very melancholy in his Case, when he gave these *Songs of Glory to the Righteous* so much interruption, as to complain, *My Leanness, my Leanness! Wo unto me! the treacherous Dealer dealeth treacherously; yea, the treacherous Dealer dealeth very treacherously.* Here you may observe,

1. The Matter of his Lamentation is *Leanness*: and it must signify a dismal Case, when he repeats it, as if it had dissolv'd his Hopes, and unravel'd all that God had been doing for them abroad. We can scarce understand it of a Personal Calamity, tho he calls it *his Leanness*; unless it may be suppos'd that he was a Man pointed at by a malicious World, as one that shou'd be given up to a popular Fury, as he had once complain'd before: *Behold I, and the Children God has given me, are for Signs and Wonders in Israel.*

Ch. viii.
18.

But the *Leanness* here seems to include the Misery of several others besides himself: 'Tis threaten'd upon all *Israel*. In that day it shall come to pass, that the Glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the Fatness of his Flesh shall wax lean. And it shall be as when the Harvest-Man gathers the Corn, and reaps the Ears with his Arm — Yet gleanings shall be left in it, as the shaking of an Olive-Tree, two or three Berries in the uppermost Bough, four or five in the utmost fruitful

Ch. xvii.
4, 5, 6.

fruitful Branches thereof. And I the rather chuse to understand the Judgment to be thus extensive in this Chapter, because we find some of those words repeated : *When thus it* Ver. 13. *shall be in the midst of the Land, among the People, there shall be as the shaking of an Olive-Tree, and as the gleaning Grapes when the Vintage is done.* Now the *Leanness* that gave him so deep a Concern, may include two things:

(1.) The abounding of Sin and Wickedness among 'em. And the Book is full of these Complaints : *Thy Princes are rebellious and Com-* Ch. i. 23. *panions of Thieves; every one loves Gifts, and follows after Rewards. Nothing could save 'em but a thorow Reformation; restoring their* Ver. 26. *Judges as at the first, and their Counsellors as at the beginning.* In another Chapter he gives a most tragical account, how they had sunk from the Figure they made abroad, and the Sedateness they once enjoy'd at home: *The* Ch. viii. *mighty Man, the Man of War, the Judg, the 2, 3. Prophet, the Prudent, the Antient, the Captain of Fifty, and the Honourable Man; the Counsellor, the cunning Artificer, and the eloquent Orator:* these were all Partners either in the Crime or the Infelicity of those days. And they seem'd to be going on fast to Ruin, when common Civility and Justice fail'd among 'em; Rudeness run loose and wild, the Laws were hush'd, that it might have no Controul: *I will give* Ver. 4, 5. *Children to be their Oppressors, and Bubes shall rule over them: The People shall be oppress'd every one by another, and every one by his Neighbour: The Child shall behave himself proudly against the Antient, and the Base against the Honourable.* Nay, so unhappy was their Case, that they who led 'em caus'd 'em to err, and destroy'd the way

way of their paths. But it would be too much to collect all that he has said on this melancholy Theme. I only take these, as being most in view, and shall add no more to 'em than one Instance in the Chapter before us:

Ver. 5. *The Earth is defil'd under the Inhabitants thereof, because they have transgress'd the Laws, chang'd the Ordinances, and broke the everlasting Covenant. This may well be call'd their Leanness, and deserv'd to be the Lamentation of every one, who trembled for the fierce Anger of the Lord.*

(2.) It may also signify the Miseries that were coming upon 'em. In this sense it was threaten'd against the *Assyrian*, that God

Ch. x. 16. *would send among his fat ones Leanness, and underneath his Glory should be kindled a burning, like the burning of a Fire.* And thus it was to be in *Israel*, as appears by this Chapter. Their Riches were going: *Behold the Lord makes the*

Ver. 1. *Earth empty, and makes it wast, turning it upside down, and scattering abroad the Inhabitants thereof.* That Expression of turning it upside down carries an Allusion too plain to be mistaken, that it should lose what it was lately so full of, and become as much the Reproach of other Nations, as it had been their Envy. They might endeavour to keep their feet, by staggering out of one Project into another: but these Measures are call'd their

Ver. 20. *reeling to and fro like a Drunkard, till the Earth was remov'd like a Cottage; because the Transgression thereof was heavy upon it, it should fall and not rise again.* And to all this you may add a dreadful Circumstance, that in the days of this Prophet they were frequently alarm'd with Invasions. The Word
of

of the Lord came to him in the Reign of *Abaz* and *Hezekiah*. 'Twas against the former of 'em, that the Kings of *Syria* and *Israel* came up to *vex* Judah, and make a breach in it, and set up the Son of Tabeal: And in the Reign of the latter, *Rabshakeh* came with a powerful Army. Now tho each of these Attempts miscarry'd, yet when the Prophet saw the People beginning to be miserable, and not begun to be thoughtful, he might well cry out, *My Leanness, my Leanness!*

2. He tells us what the Occasion of this was, how it came to pass, that things had such an unhappy Run, as he now complain'd of. 'Twas not owing to the Force of Enemies, tho they had reason in his day to be afraid of that: nor did it arise from any Calamity brought upon 'em by the immediate Hand of God. The Earth did not fail of yielding her Increase, nor the Heavens of dropping down their Dew. Tho these are threaten'd as things that would be, yet they either had not fallen with their full weight upon 'em then; or if they had, he turns his eyes to something more lamentable, worse than the Miseries of Drought and Famine; what lay nearer his Concern, and had the main Guilt of bringing this *Leanness* upon 'em: and this is, that *the treacherous Dealers had dealt treacherously, yea, the treacherous Dealers dealt very treacherously.*

1st. He complains of a most formidable Evil, and what there can be no guard against; Treachery in those Persons on whose Integrity they had their chief dependance. It might be hard to know the Men, but much harder to find out the Schemes they acted by.

This is a Crime carried on with the fairest Pretences to Honesty and Love; nothing could make a worse Appearance to Human Reason than a Kingdom so divided against it self, as that of *Judah* now was.

Ch. xix.
11.

The Case that he thus describes in his own Nation, is parallel to what he had laid down as the Judgment of *Egypt*. *Surely the Princes of Zoan are Fools, the Counsel of the wise Counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish.* And what's the Counsel that he thus animadverts on? That instead of advising their King, they were throwing Flattery into his Pride, and making him great with meer Names, at the time that his Interest was really sinking in all the valuable Branches of it; filling his Ears with Hereditary Right, and the long Race of Monarchs he had sprung from: *How say ye to Pharaoh, I am the Son of the Wise, the Son of antient Kings?* q. d. What is this to the purpose? Does it make his Reign more honourable to himself, or more happy to his People? Well might he add, *The Princes of Zoan are become Fools, the Princes of Noph are deceived, they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the Stay of the Tribes thereof. The Lord has mingled a perverse Spirit in the midst thereof; and they have caused Egypt to err in every work, as a drunken Man staggers in his vomit: i. e. the same Wickedness has both made their Heads giddy, and their way slippery.*

Ver. 13,
14.

Now, that it should be thus with *Egypt* is not so surprizing: but that *Judah* should fall into the most lamentable Fate of the Heathen, that in the Land of Uprightness they will deal unjustly, and not behold the Majesty of the Lord, is what would touch the severest Cares of every good Man. But,

2. The

2. The Complaint reaches further ; 'tis more than repeated, he says it over again with an Aggravation ; *Yea, the treacherous Dealers have dealt very treacherously.* As if they knew no Bounds to their Hypocrisy, but had *left off to be wise, and to do good.* They will stick at nothing, but allow themselves at the same time in the fairest Pretences and the foulest Actions : They can at once make Religion their Imitation and their Jest : *With flattering Lips, and with a double Tongue do they speak.* 'Twas this that made *Jeremy* wish for a lodging-place in the Wilderness, that he might leave his People and go from 'em, because they were all an Assembly of treacherous Men : Every Brother would supplant, and every Neighbour walk with Slanders ; they would not speak the Truth, but had taught their Tongues to speak Lyes, and wearied themselves to commit Iniquity. Psal. xxxvi. 4.

Now these are ways that bring a certain Calamity along with 'em. Tho the Persons who are guilty may for a time defend themselves, and deceive others, yet such a Connexion of Wickedness will be fatal at last. When the Prophets prophesy falsely, the Snare begins there, and the Priests bear Rule by their means : And 'tis so far from making any Uneasiness at present, that the People love to have it so, but what will they do in the end thereof ? If such things are left only to their natural Tendency, they will soon entangle a Kingdom, and make every thing precarious that they once possess'd. Jer. ix. 2.

You see the Time is so full of this plain Account that I have given you of the Prophet's Words, that I have no room for an Application ; instead of that, I will only endeavour to remove an Objection that some may be ready

dy to make against this good Man's Conduct, in a Case so mingled as that of his Country was.

The Argument lies thus: " If *treacherous Dealers* are so dangerous, no regard can be had to any Mercies, especially those afar off. It signifies nothing what *Songs* the *Jews* might fetch from the uttermost parts of the Earth, when they had reason to think themselves undone at home by an extravagant Hypocrisy, where the *treacherous Dealers* were dealing very *treacherously*." Thus would Unbelief plead from the sad Aspect in Judah it self, to sink the Credit of a foreign Victory.

I shall give you some few things in answer to this, and shew you, that supposing the Case as lamentable as the Prophet had made it, yet it was nevertheless his Duty to take part in those *Songs* that proclaim'd a *Glory to the righteous*.

1. He was hereby led to consider the Perfections of God, who could as easily dissolve a *Treachery*, as he had confounded an open Force. These two are join'd together; *With Job xii. 16 him is Strength and Wisdom, the Deceived and the Deceivers are his*: His *Strength* can protect the *Deceived*, His *Wisdom* can baffle the *Deceiver*. This is what they are exhorted to think of a little before their Return from *Babylon*, there was a Conflict of Hope and Danger in their Case; and therefore the Advice *Jer. l. 50. is, Ye that have escaped the Sword, go away, stand not still*. Here they're put upon fleeing, and yet they are charged to remember the Lord afar off, and let *Jerusalem* come into their mind; i. e. they were to sustain themselves with those Things

Things that God had done at a distance from 'em : and when their Thoughts were rolling in his Power and Wisdom, they might turn towards *Jerusalem* with this Argument, He that has *made bare His Arm* in other places, can bring the Salvation nearer, and display himself amongst us. If *He is wise in Heart* as well as *mighty in Strength*, no Man can harden himself against Him and prosper. Job ix. 4.

2. The Prophet could not but know there was a certain Entail of Vengeance upon all Treachery ; that God *abhors the bloody and deceitful Man* ; that such do seldom live out half their days. Sometimes when this Justice of Providence is delay'd, it has prov'd a sore Temptation even to good Men. *Jeremy complains, Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I* Jer. xii. *plead with Thee ; yet let me talk with Thee of Thy* 1. 2. *Judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper ? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously ? Thou hast planted them, and they have taken Root ; they grow, yea, they bring forth Fruit : Thou art near in their Mouth, and far from their Reins. But he gets over this difficulty in the best manner ; first, it puts him upon looking within, and enquiring into his own sincerity. Thou, O Lord, knowest* Ver. 3. *me ; Thou hast seen me, and tried my Heart towards Thee. And, after this important Case is clear, he goes on to tell what shall become of them, pull them out like Sheep for the Slaughter. There's something so provoking in the carriage of a Deceiver, that the Vengeance of God usually condemns him to fall by his own Arts, and perish in the same way that he has made others do. We have two dreadful woes against such People in this Prophecy. The former*

former you meet with Chap. xxix. 15, 16. *Wo to them, that seek deep to hide their Counsel from the Lord, and their Works are in the Dark, and they say who sees us, and who knows us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteem'd as Potter's Clay.* The other is Chap. xxxiii. 1. *Wo unto thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee. When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.*

Job
xxxiv. 30.

Isa. xxxii.
5.

3. The Prophet was further sensible, that it would be a publick Mercy to have these treacherous Dealers better known; that they might no longer have it in their power to wear a rough Garment, and deceive: *The Hypocrite is not always to reign, lest the People be ensnared.* One of the Mercies of that day, when the Gospel will have a free Course and be glorified, is, that the vile Person will no more be called *Liberal*, nor the Churl said to be *Bountiful*. And sometimes God, in a righteous Justice, suffers People to go on in new Crimes, that He may bring upon them the punishment of their old ones. 'Tis thus that they fill up the Measure of their Iniquities. Joab was too necessary to David's Government, and early in the Revolution, and therefore had his Life spar'd, after a double Forfeiture, for shedding the blood of War in Peace, killing two Men better than himself. Nay, 'tis observ'd he was stanch to the Crown in the Rebellion of Absalom, and yet he heads a Party against the Succession of Solomon in favour of Adonijah, because he was first in the Line. Nay, after this was overlook'd, and he only condemn'd to a private Life; he's

he's quickly again in a Plot, as if *his hoary Hairs were not to go down to the Grave in Peace*: And therefore, tho he runs *to the Horns of the Altar*, 'twas only to fall as a National Sacrifice there. When the Hypocrisy of Men is thus open'd out, *the People shall no more stay themselves upon him that smote them, but upon the Lord, the Holy one of Israel in Truth.* Isa. x. 20.

4. The Prophet was sure that the Interest of God wou'd prevail, and the Happiness of his People be establish'd. He was not without hopes of seeing a publick Turn in favour of Sion; but whether that came in his days or no, there was no cheating him of Heaven: *The Treacherous Dealer* could not extend his Policy so far.

We find a Case very like this, that our Prophet had before him, in the days of *Ezekiel*; *The Spirit of the Lord lift him up, and brought him to the East Gate of the Lord's House, which look'd Eastward: and behold at the Door of the Gate were five and twenty Men, among whom he saw Jaazaniah the Son of Azur, and Pelatiah the Son of Benaiah, Princes of the People. And God tells him, Son of Man, these are the Men that devise Mischief, and give wicked Counsel in this City. But when they are threatned with falling by the Sword, and being judg'd in the border of Israel, such as they thought to ensnare are taken into the tenderest Protection; secur'd in Peace of Conscience, and the beauties of Holiness. For, tho the Inhabitants of Jerusalem would have banish'd 'em, saying to 'em, Get ye far from the Lord, unto us is the Land given in Possession; yet God promises that they shall have the Honour to take away all detestable Things, and Abominations thereof: and he* would

would give 'em one Heart, and put a new Spirit within 'em; that they might walk in his Statutes, and keep his Ordinances and do 'em; for they should be His People, and He would be their God.

Ver. 21, And in this Chapter, our Prophet declares
22, 23. his Hope of better times, that the Lord would punish the Host of the High ones that are on high, and the Kings of the Earth upon the Earth; they should be gather'd in the Pit, and shut up in the Prison: And then shall the Moon be confounded and the Sun ashamed, when the Lord shall reign in Mount Sion, and before his Antients gloriously. These are the Blessings with which He designs to close the Confusions His People are now lamenting. And, tho 'tis not for us to know the Times and Seasons, which the Father has reserv'd in His own Power, yet every Believer
Dan. xii. ult. may take the Advice given to Daniel, to go his way, till the End be; for he shall rest, and stand in his Lot at the end of the Days.

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